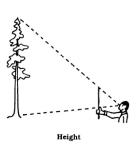
HOW TO MEASURE A CHAMPION TREE

There's a pretty simple way to do a preliminary check on a tree to see if it is of "champion" quality. All you need is a long piece of string, a tape measure, a twig as long as your arm and four pieces of branches for stakes.

Circumference: The measurement of the distance around the truck of the tree (circumference) should be taken at a point four and one half feet above the ground. A non-stretch string will do if the measuring tape is rigid or will not reach around the tree. Measure the length of string that encircles the tree.



Height: The height can be measured with a straight stick, if more accurate means are not available. Hold the stick straight up and down (perpendicular to the ground) at arm's length in front of you. The length of the stick above your hand should be at the same distance from your hand to your eye. While holding the stick upright at arm's length, walk backwards away from the tree until the stick above your hand appears to be the same length as the tree. (You will be sighting over your hand to the base of the tree and, without moving anything but your eye, sighting over the top of the stick to the top of the tree). The distance from the base of the tree to where you are standing should be approximately the same as the height of the tree.



Crown Spread: For the crown spread, you'll need two sets of measurements to make an average. Step back and take a look at the tree's crown. It's probably not symmetrical, and the longest branches going in one direction may be shorter or longer than the longest branches in another direction. You need to measure both the longest and shortest set of branches and get an average to determine a crown spread.



You measure the spread of the branches while standing on the ground. Eyeball where you think the crown spread ends on the longest set of branches and put a stake in the ground on each side of the tree. Then step back and sight to see if the stakes are place correctly. Adjust them until the spread of branches is accurately marked on the ground. Do the same with the shortest set of branches. Measure the distance of the shortest and longest set of branches, then compute the average crown spread.